

Below is a list of seventy authentic Imam Ali quotes and short sermons from Sunni sources. The purpose of this compilation is to let visitors know that the teachings of Ali bin Abi Talib have been authentically preserved by Ahl Al-Sunnah.

The references and authentications are based upon the work of Atif Abdul-Wahab Hammad's book Jami' Al-Athar Al-Qawliya wal Fi'liyah Al-Saheeha lil Khalifa Al-Rashid Ali bin Abi Talib, in which he collected over nine-hundred authentic Imam Ali quotes.

Imam Ali quotes in Tawheed / Worship / Piety

1- "If I narrated from the messenger of Allah peace be upon him, I would rather fall from the sky than attribute to him something he didn't say."

Al-Bukhari (3611)

2- "My favorite words by a servant to Allah are: 'O' Allah, there is no god but you. O' Allah, I worship none but you. O' Allah, I don't associate any partners with you. O' Allah, I wronged myself, so forgive me from my sins, for none can forgive sins but you."

Al-Musanaf by Abi Shayba (29522)

3- Ali bin Abi Talib told Abi Al-Hayyaj Al-Asadi: "Shall I send you to what I was sent for by the Messenger of Allah - peace be upon him - ? To leave no idol undistorted and to level all graves with height."

Muslim (969)

4- "Those fortune-tellers are the soothsayers of Persians. Whosoever goes to a soothsayer and believes what he says has disassociated himself from the teachings of Muhammad - peace be upon him - ."

Ibn Abi Shayba (23525)

5- "Meet up and recite the narrations in remembrance, otherwise they would be erased (from your memory)."

Al Musanaf by Abi Shayba (26134)

6- "Our souls are in the hand of Allah, if He wishes to send us (to the hereafter) He would send us."

Saheeh Al-Bukhari (1127)

7- "If words are overused, they will lose effect before you find a substitute for them. Do not seek help but from Allah. Do not fear anything but your sins. Don't be shy to learn if you are ignorant. Scholars are not to be shy to say Allah knows best about matters they don't know. Be aware that patience is to faith as the head is to the body. If the head goes, the body goes as well, and if patience diminishes, faith diminishes as well."

Al-Musannaf by Abi Shayba (34504)

8- When Ali bin Abi Talib was asked to talk about himself, he said: "I speak of the blessings of my Lord. By Allah, I was answered whenever I

asked and was given even before I could request, and underneath the ribs there is tremendous knowledge."

Fadha'il Al-Sahaba by Imam Ahmad (1099)

9- "Shall I inform you about the true jurist? He is the one who does not let people despair from the mercy of Allah. He does not permit them to disobey Allah's orders. He does not secure them from Allah's punishments. He also does not leave Qur'an for others. Truly, there is no benefit from worship that does not entail jurisprudence, there is no benefit from jurisprudence that is excluded from understanding, and there is no benefit from reading without contemplation."

Al-Zuhd by Abu Dawud (111)

10- "Quraish are the leaders of Arabs. The pious among them are the leaders of their pious and wicked among them are the leaders of their wicked. The two groups have rights so give each group their rights as long as you are not asked to choose between Islam and decapitation. If anyone among you was given the choice between Islam and decapitation, then he is to extend his neck - may his mother weep for him - for there is no life or afterlife without Islam."

Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shayba (33712)

11- "The leaders are from Quraysh. Whoever abandons the people by a span is one who pulls the head of Islam from his neck."

Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shayba (3715)

12- "The key of prayer is purification; the takbeer (the exclamation of the greatness of Allah) causes all those surrounding it to be forbidden, and the salutations allows the permissibility to return."

Musnad Ahmad (1006)

13- "I bathe in cold nights without even being in a greater state of impurity in order to grow in patience and purify myself."

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (2081)

14- "If you say when bowing: O' Allah, I bow down for your sake, in piety to you, I submit to you, I believe in you, and from you I seek assistance; your bowing shall be considered complete."

Musnad Al-Shafi'i (386)

15- Ali bin Abi Talib said while upon the grave of Yazid bin Al Mukaffaf, "O' Allah, he is your worshiper and the son of your worshiper. He is your guest and You are the Greatest Host. O' Allah, expand his entry and forgive his sins. We only know good of him - and You know best - and that is what is held by us."

Musannaf Abdul-Razzaq (6506)

16- "To rule according to what was revealed by Allah and execute what he was trusted upon is the duty of the Imam, if he were to do those things, then it is a duty for the Muslims to hear, obey, and beckon his call."

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (32532)

17- When asked what he was delegated with during the pilgrimage, he responded, "I was sent with four matters: That the Ka'aba will not be encircled in the nude, that those who have a pact between them and the Prophet - peace be upon him - will have it until it expires and those that don't have four months, that only a believer shall go to paradise, and that Muslims and disbelievers will not gather after this year."

Sunan Al-Tirmithi (3092)

18- When asked about the second verse in Surat Al-Mu'minoon, he replied, "Being god-fearing is an act of the heart, to be soft with your fellow Muslim, and to not turn around (due to distraction) in prayer."

Al-Hakim in Al-Mustadrak 2/392

19- "I fear for you two things: Attachment to the world and the following of desires. The attachment will make you forget the afterlife and the following of desires is an obstacle to truth. This world is going away and the hereafter is coming. Each one has children, so be from the children of the hereafter and not those of this world. Today is a day of work without judgment and tomorrow is a day of judgment without work."

Al-Zuhd by Ibn Al-Mubarak 1/269

20- "The son of Adam was destroyed by the two containers: His reproductive organ and his stomach."

Ibn Abi Al-Dunya's Mawsoo'ah 1/218

21- When criticized for his modest clothing, he replied, "It influences a believer to follow it (in modesty) and it creates piety."

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (34500)

Imam Ali quotes in the topic of Holding onto the Qur'an and the Sunnah

22- Ali bin Abi Talib told Iyas bin Amir Al-Ghafiqi, "If you remain long enough, (you will witness) three groups reciting Qur'an: A group for the sake of Allah, a group for the sake of argument, and a group for their livelihood."

Al-Sunan Al-Darami (3372)

23- "Your mouths are the paths of the Qur'an, so provide them with a good scent with the siwak."

Sunan Ibn Majah (291)

24- "Those with sound minds do not sleep until reciting the last three verses from Al-Baqara, they are from the treasures that are beneath the Throne."

Ibn Dhurais' Fadha'il Al-Qur'an (87)

25- "By Allah, we do not have a book to teach you except for the book of Allah Almighty and this document which was given to me by the Messenger of Allah - peace be upon him - which contains rulings about the alms."

Musnad Ahmad (782)

26- "I am not one to leave the tradition of the Prophet - peace be upon him - for one's opinion."

Al-Bukhari (1563)

27- "Narrate to people about what they know: Do you wish for Allah and His messenger to be disbelieved?"

Al-Bukhari (127)

28- "If I narrated a narration from the Messenger of Allah - peace be upon him - , then understand it in the most comforting, guiding, and in a manner that leads to piety."

Musnad Abu Dawud Al Tayalissi (101)

29- "If the religion was based on rationale, then it would make more sense to wipe the bottom of the socks than its top, and I have seen the messenger of Allah - peace be upon Him - wipe the top of his socks."

Sunan Abu Dawud (162)

30- When Ali bin Abi Talib sent Ibn Abbas to the Khawarij, he said, "Go and challenge them. Do not debate them with the Qur'an, for it has many faces (for interpretation), but challenge them with the sunnah."

Al-Lalika'ee in Sharh Usool Al-I'itiqad (203)

31- When Ali bin Abi Talib passed by a storyteller and asked him, "Do you know how to distinguish between abrogating and abrogated rulings?" The man answered, "I do not." Ali said, "You have destroyed (your followers) and you are destroyed."

Al-'Ilm by Abu Khaythama p. 31

Imam Ali quotes in Morals and General Words of Wisdom

32- "The slanderer and the one who spreads it are equal in guilt."

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad by Al Bukhari (324)

33- "The speakers of falsehood and the one who extends its rope it are equal in guilt."

Al Mawsu'at Ibn Abi Al Dunya 7/172

34- "Do not be hasty exposers of secrets, for you will face a harsh test and a lengthy heavy trial that will cause you to frown."

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad by Al Bukhari (327)

35- "Be among the people like the bees among birds. All birds consider it as deficient in strength. If birds knew the blessing it carried they wouldn't do so. Socialize with men with your tongues and bodies, and

separate from them with your deeds and hearts. The man earns what is his and he shall be gathered in the Day of Judgment with those he loves."

Al-Sunan Al-Darami (320)

36- "The mind is in the heart, the mercy is in the liver, the tenderness is in the spleen, and the soul is in the lungs."

Al-Adab Al-Mufrad by Al-Bukhari (547)

37- Ali bin Abi Talib used to say whenever he was called to funeral prayers, "We are but those that stand; what prays upon the deceased are his deeds."

Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shaybah (11222)

Imam Ali quotes in Fairness, Justice, and Extremism

38- "The people of this nation will split into seventy three sects. The worst among them is one that poses to love us and abandons our orders."

Al-Ahadith Al-Muntaqat by Ibn Dayzeel p. 96

39- "There will be those that love me until they enter hellfire due to their love for me, and others that would hate me until they enter hellfire due to their hatred of me."

Al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim (983)

40- "Two groups of people, in relation to me, will be destroyed: an excessive lover and an excessive hater."

Al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim (984)

41- "There are three types of judges: Two in Hellfire and one in Heaven. The judges in hellfire are a deliberately unfair judge and a judge who sought justice but brought error. The other is one who wants justice and attains it, and he is in Heaven." When asked about the type that intended justice but erred, he replied: "One who does not know how to judge should not be a judge."

Al-Musannaf by Ibn Abi Shayba (22963)

42- He said to Abu Musa before the arbitration, "Make your ruling, even (if you decide) upon striking my neck."

Ibn Abi Shayba in Al-Musannaf (37853)

Imam Ali quotes in the topic of the Merits of the Companions

43- "I was told that some people prefer me over Abu Bakr and Omar! If I had went ahead (in giving a warning) I would have punished, but I dislike punishing without precaution. Whoever says something like this is a slanderer, and upon him is what is upon a slanderer (in punishment). The best of people is the messenger of Allah - peace be upon him - , then

after the messenger of Allah - peace be upon him - come Abu Bakr and Omar. We have acted upon matters in which Allah will judge as He wishes."

Al-Sunnah by Ibn Abi Asim (993)

44- When asked about his rank among the Companions of the Prophet - peace be upon him - , he replied, "I am but a man from among the Muslims."

Saheeh Al-Bukhari (3671)

45- "May Allah have mercy upon Abu Bakr, for he was the first to gather (the Qur'an) that which is between the two covers."

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (35751)

46- "We would not feel that it was improbable that serenity spoke upon the tongue of Omar."

Al-Ma'rifa by Ya'qoub bin Sufyan 1/461

47- At the funeral of Omar he said, "After you, there is nobody that I would rather meet my Lord with his deeds than you. By Allah, I felt that He would place you with your companions, for I would always hear from the prophet of Allah - peace be upon him - saying, 'Abu Bakr, Omar, and I went... Abu Bakr, Omar, and I entered... Abu Bakr, Omar, and I left...'"

Al-Bukhari (3677, 3685)

48- At the first night of Ramadan, Ali bin Abi Talib came out to find the lanterns twinkling and the Qur'an being recited in the mosques. He then said: "May Allah enlighten your grave o' Omar bin Al-Khattab just as you have enlightened the mosques of Allah."

Al-Mawsu'ah by Ibn Abi Al Dunyah 1/ 369

49- "O' people, do not be extreme (in your views) about Uthman. Do not say but good in the masahif and the burning of the masahif. He did not do what he did with a large number of us... If I was in his position, I would have done the same."

Ibn Abi Dawud in Al-Masahif p. 28-29

50- Upon hearing that the army of A'isha was cursing the killers of Uthman, he raised his hands to the level of his face, and said, "And I curse the killers of Uthman, may Allah damn them in the valleys and in the mountains."

Musnad Ahmad (733)

51- On the day of Siffeen, an enemy shouted, "Vengeance for Uthman!" Ali bin Abi Talib replied, "O' Allah, cause the killers of Uthman to plunge onto their nostrils."

Ibn Shibbah in Akhbar Al-Madinah 2/275

52- On the day of the death of Abdul-Rahman bin Awf, he said, "Go on Ibn Awf, for you have witnessed the pure spring and you have left before arriving the dirty pond."

Ibn Sa'ad in Al-Tabaqat 3/135

Imam Ali Quotes and Sermons during his Rule

53- Ali bin Abi Talib said about the Khawarij, "I shall not fight he who does not fight me." Then Ali said: "They have three rights. Do not prevent them from entering the mosques lest they remember Allah. Do not deprive them from booty as long as their hands are with ours. Do not fight them until they fight us."

Al-Amwal by Abu Ubayd (567)

54- When Al-Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib spoke to his father about the internal wars and struggles, Ali responded, "As for your advice about going to Makkah, I would not be the man that is the cause of the forbidden land to become halal (due to bloodshed). As for what you said about the siege on Uthman, what is it a sin upon me when it was between the people and Uthman? And as for your advice about withdrawing away from the people of Iraq, then by Allah I am not one like a hyena that is enticed with the sounds of stones."

Ibn Shibbah's Tareekh Al-Madinah 2/272

55- After the battle of Al-Jamal, he said, "Do not kill one who flees and do not finish off those that are injured. Whoever closes his door is safe and whoever tosses his weaponry is safe."

Sunan Sa'eed bin Mansoor 2/337

56- "This nation has killed the best person from among it. We have marched to Al-Basra, a people that have pledged to us, and we have attained victory due to their submission, and you shall march to Al-Sham, a people that have not pledged to you, so look onto where you place your weapons."

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (37784)

57- During the battle with the Khawarij, he said, "O' people, if you are fighting for me, then I do not have anything to tell you, but if you are fighting for Allah, then do not fight in this manner." They then attained victory and obliterated the Khawarij.

Musnad Ishaq bin Rahawaih via Al-Matalib Al-A'liya (4439)

58- In response to Al-Khawarij who said, "No rule but the rule of Allah," Ali bin Abi Talib commented, "A statement of truth that is used to seek falsehood."

Saheeh Muslim (1066)

59- Ali bin Abi Talib said in a sermon condemning his followers, "O' Allah I am sick of them and they are sick of me, I have grown restless from them and they have grown restless from me, so give me peace from them and give them peace from me, and what prevents the worst of them from soaking it with blood?!" He then grabbed his beard.

Musannaf Abdul-Razzaq (18670)

60- Ali bin Abi Talib said in a sermon, "I was told that Busr has arrived at Yemen, and by Allah, I believe that those people will overtake you. They will not overtake you except by your disobedience to your Imam and their obedience to their Imam; your treachery and their trust, your destruction upon your land and their restoration. I sent a man and he betrayed, and I sent another and he betrayed, and he brought the money to Mu'awiyah. If I were to trust one of you people with a cup, you would take the handle. O' Allah, I am sick of them and they are sick of me, I despise them and they despise me, so give me peace from them and give them peace from me."

Tareekh Dimashq by Ibn Asakir 42/535

61- A man from the Khawarij said to Ali bin Abi Talib, "Fear Allah, for you will die." He replied, "Rather, I will be killed, a strike on this (head) will soak this (beard), a fulfilled pact and an ordained destiny, and those who state falsehood will fail."

Musnad Ahmad (703)

62- When warned of those that want to kill him, he responded, "With each man are two angels that protect him from what was not destined upon him, though if destiny came, they leave it between him and it, for death is a heavenly fortress."

Ibn Sa'ad in Al-Tabaqaat 3/34

63- After Ibn Muljim's attack, Ali bin Abi Talib said, "He is a prisoner of war so treat him well in his stay. If I survive, it is up to me if I choose to kill him or to pardon him, and if I die, then kill him in the way I was killed without transgressing, for Allah does not love the oppressors."

Ibn Sa'ad in Al-Tabaqaat 3/35

64- After Ibn Muljim's attack, Ali bin Abi Talib said, "Feed him what I am fed and provide him the drinks that I was provided with. If I live, I will consider, and if I die, then strike him once without addition."

Ibn Abi Al-Dunya's Mawsoo'ah 8/361

Imam Ali quotes about Early Nations and the End of Times

65- "Ibrahim - peace be onto him - came from Armenia and with him was the serenity that led him until he reach the Ka'aba in the same way a spider enters its abode. They (Ibrahim and Isma'eel) lifted stones that couldn't be lifted by thirty men."

Akhbar Makkah by Al-Azraqi 1/110

66- When asked about Thu Al-Qarnain, he replied, "He was not a prophet, nor a king, but a slave that would seek the guidance of Allah and thus received it. He called his people to Allah and was struck on the right qarn (side of his head) and died. He was raised by Allah. He then called his people to Allah and was struck on the left qarn and died. He was raised by Allah. He was then called Thu Al-Qarnain."

Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (31914)

67- "Allah the Almighty tested this nation with five trials, a common trial, then a private one, then a common trial, then a private one, then a black and dark trial where people turn into animals".

Al Ma'rifah wal Tarikh by Ya'qoub (3/220)

68- "Islam will diminish until no one says: 'Allah, Allah.' Once this happen, the master of this religion will remain steadfast. When he does so, some people will join him and gather around him like clouds. By Allah, I know the name of their leader and the destination of their caravans".

Al Musanaf by Abi Shaybah (7/ 452 - 37153)

69- "You are shrouded by a dark and blind trial that none will be saved from it but al-nuwamma." He was asked, "O' Aba Al-Hasan, and what is al-nuwamma?" He said, "It is he who does not let the people know what is within himself."

Al Mawsu'ah by Ibn Abi Al-Dunya 3/ 545

70- "Circle the Ka'aba excessively, for the day in which a bald man with small ears and bony legs that will destroy it with a shovel is approaching."

Al-Fitan by Nu'aym bin Hammad (1874)

THE END